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DAN SMOOT

OUR TAX MONEY BREEDS MISERY

On June 4, 1970, the House, by a vote of 191 to 153, passed HR 17867, appropriating $2.2 billion for some aspects of foreign aid in fiscal 1971. President Nixon had requested $2.9 billion.[1] The Senate has not acted on this bill.

There was much moaning among foreign aiders about this "gutting" of the foreign aid program. There was much breast-beating about America's callous neglect of her responsibility to help less fortunate nations. There were warnings that calamity will overtake us if we do not open the spigots wider and drain off more of our wealth for poor nations.

Dr. John A. Hannah, Administrator of the Agency for International Development (AID — the current name for the foreign aid agency) says:

"The United States must help the people of the poorer nations to improve the quality of their lives if Americans expect to enjoy the stability and prosperity of a peaceful world. . . .

"It is unrealistic to think that thirty years from now 300 million Americans can live comfortably here while across the continents of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, more than twice the present population — some seven billions of people — struggle to eke out an existence."[2]

They already outnumber us more than 15 to 1. In 30 years, they will outnumber us almost 25 to 1. They have natural resources more abundant and more varied than we have. We have already given them billions of dollars in aid to get started; but, according to foreign aid lobbyists, the living standards of poor nations continue to fall further below ours.

AID director Hannah says that, although classrooms for school-age children in the poor nations have "tripled and quadrupled in number in the last 20 years," those countries soon "will be swamped in a tide of new illiterates" because the "school-age population . . . will double in the next decade."[2]

In short, destitution worsens in many poor nations, despite all outside aid and whatever efforts

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they make themselves, because they breed people faster than they gain in any other activity.

We have spent billions on food to alleviate hunger in such places as India; but we have thereby probably caused more hunger than we have alleviated. American food given away abroad not only enriches a few foreign politicians (and possibly some Americans), but it also accelerates the reproductive activity of the undernourished millions. Our medical aid has increased the lifespans, and consequently the numbers of children, of the impoverished.

Today, throughout the "developing countries," there may be twice as many people suffering in squalid poverty from malnutrition and exposure as there would have been if our aid had not subsidized population growth. In the same way, but on a much larger scale, our tax money is also subsidizing bastardy, idleness, and excessive population growth among welfare recipients here at home.

AID director Hannah tells of an AID measles-control and smallpox-eradication project which resulted in the innoculation of 100 million people against smallpox and 20 million children against measles in 19 nations of central- and west Africa. He says:

"In those countries, almost 200 years after the beginning of vaccination against smallpox in this country, thousands of people were dying each year from smallpox, and tens of thousands of children were dying each year from measles. . . . In a little over two years, smallpox as a cause of death has practically disappeared."(3)

If this AID project did save the lives of millions of children, it did not "improve the quality of their lives." It will, however, make possible the breeding of tens of millions of other children who will spend their lives in grinding poverty, holding on to existence just enough to breed more scores of millions to live and die in want.

Crowd diseases and filth diseases are the only real controllers of population among the illiterate masses of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. We may curtail or eliminate the diseases; but we can do little about the resulting population explosion which, some say, already endangers all life on this planet.

Bert M. Tollefson, Jr., AID assistant administrator, says:

"Can we afford to assist international development at a time when the United States is confronted by pressing problems of *domestic* development? The answer is clear. We have already learned at home the price a society pays for ignoring the problems of the disadvantaged — of telling the poor and hungry that they must wait."(4)

There are three monumental fallacies in Mr. Tollefson's veiled threat that the poor nations, out of envy and hate, will some day rise up and strike us down if we do not give them all the aid they demand.

Fallacy One: Mr. Tollefson implies that poor nations have the capacity to fight major wars against advanced nations. They do not. They do not even have the capacity to initiate such wars, though they are often used as pawns in conflicts between advanced nations.

Fallacy Two: Mr. Tollefson implies that the violence which has scarred the face and soul of America during the past six years resulted from poor people revolting in righteous anger, demanding what is morally and legally theirs. The implication is a lie. Leaders of the worst U.S. riots since 1964 were well-financed revolutionaries. Many, if not most, participants in the riots were persons who had, or could have had, good jobs — or they were pampered brats from prosperous families.

Fallacy Three: Mr. Tollefson assumes that aid from governments of advanced nations can solve the interior problems of poor countries, but it cannot. What our foreign aiders see as *problems* in poor countries is a way of life. Our government can finance (and has been financing) social and political upheavals which deliver poor countries into the grip of communist dictators (or tighten the hold of existing dictatorships); but the U.S. government cannot force, bribe, induce, educate,

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or train other nations into a way of life satisfying to our political leaders; and it has no business trying.

If American individuals, private organizations, private businesses, or churches want to do business or missionary work (religious, educational, medical, agricultural, industrial, cultural) in poor nations, assuming whatever risks may be involved, our government should not prohibit them. Over long stretches of time, such private aid can alter a poor nation's way of life and shape it into something more nearly resembling our own (though only God knows whether that should be done). But any kind of development aid from a foreign government (ours or any other) is indictable on many counts.

In any kind of governmental aid, selfish political interests dictate decisions that (if they are to help people in receiving nations) should be made solely for economic reasons. For example, among the "experts" we send abroad to give technical assistance to poor nations are men who teach the people how to organize and run American-style labor unions.

Ostensibly, poor nations want higher productivity so that they can support themselves and find foreign markets for some of their goods. But present-day, American-style unionism *decreases*, rather than *increases*, productivity. It stresses low productivity and high wages. It causes needless work stoppages and strikes. It requires costly payroll padding and cumbersome management procedures, intended only to enhance the power of union bosses. It discourages individual resourcefulness and initiative on the part of workers, and schools them in the attitude that the way to get ahead is to demand large return for little output, and to back their demands with force. Worst of all, American unionism impinges on the freedom of individual workers — forcing them to pay dues for political purposes they often dislike; forcing them to support an expensive and frequently corrupt union bureaucracy; eliminating their privilege of advancing as individuals on the basis of individual skill, energy, and diligence.

Why do Members of Congress tax *us* to send union organizers abroad, under the flimsy pretense that this will improve the economy of poor nations? They do it to get for themselves the political support of powerful U.S. union bosses.

Why has Congress wasted billions of our tax dollars on foreign aid harmful to poor nations because it provides them with sophisticated machinery and industrial installations which they must in part help finance and maintain, but do not have the capacity to utilize? Members of Congress have voted for such foreign aid because it provides lush contracts for important constituents back home.

Why do governments of receiving nations accept foreign aid that hurts rather than helps? Politicians in those nations can fatten their own pocketbooks, and also point to extravagant projects, equipment, and public works, boasting about what *they* have done for their people.

The foreign aid lobbyists' perennial wailing about congressional reductions in foreign aid is not only propagandistic, but also false.

The foreign aid appropriations bill for fiscal 1971 (already passed by the House, as mentioned before) was for the so-called "mutual security" part of our foreign aid program — always publicized as if it were the whole program; but our overall foreign aid program has more than a score of other parts, put elsewhere in the federal budget, and not labeled foreign aid.

Foreign aiders called President Nixon's $2.9 billion foreign aid appropriations request this year dangerously low, among the lowest requests in history. But the President actually requested $12.1 billion for new foreign aid authorizations in fiscal 1971: $2.3 billion of it was in our Department of Defense budget (for foreign military assistance); $933 million of it was in our Department of Agriculture budget (for agricultural commodities to be given to other nations); $2.9 billion of it was to underwrite long-term credits issued by the Export-Import Bank; $1.1 billion of it was for the "regular operations" of the Export-

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Import Bank; $540 million of it was for "expanded multilateral assistance" (bureaucratic jargon for U.S. tax money donated to United Nations agencies to give away as they please, without the trouble of making any accounting to the American people or to Congress); and so on. In all, there are 27 "parts" to the foreign aid appropriations request this year.

There is also a total of $18.5 billion in accumulated, unexpended foreign aid funds — tax money which Congress authorized for foreign aid in previous years, which is still available for foreign aid spending, but which the foreign aiders have not yet managed to get rid of.

If Congress passed no foreign aid appropriations bill at all this year, the Nixon administration would still have $18.5 billion to spend on foreign aid. If Congress grants all of President Nixon's requests for fiscal 1971, more than $30 billion will be available for spending on foreign aid between now and June 30, 1971.

In our voting on November 3, we failed to improve the quality of Congress; but if enough of us care, and try hard, we *can* persuade the Congress we have to stop foreign aid.

SUGGESTION: Distribute this *Report*, and other recent issues on foreign aid, as widely as possible to inform and activate others.

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My regular Christmas *Report*, "The Hope of the World," dated December 21, 1970, is already off the press, available for those who want quantities to use for special Christmas mailings. If you have never seen this issue, and would like to read it to determine whether you want to use it as a Christmas greeting, you may order a single copy. Our regular reprint prices apply — 25c for a single copy, quantity prices as shown below.

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FOOTNOTES

(1) *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, June 14, 1970, pp. 1521-1523
(2) AID press release, Oct. 30, 1970
(3) AID press release, Dec. 29, 1969
(4) AID press release, Aug. 16, 1969

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